

# WIOA TITLE I YOUTH

## PARTICIPANTS REACHING EMPLOYMENT POTENTIAL

Participants Reaching Employment Potential (PREP) is a short-term program that helps create financial sustainability and incentivize participants, who are enrolled in both WIOA Title I Youth programs and Adult Education and Literacy (AEL), to earn their GED® credential in a timely manner. PREP utilizes monthly financial incentives to support participants meeting education goals with monthly support services for rent and/or utilities, enhanced cooperation between DLR and AEL providers, work-based learning opportunity, and DLR case management. The PREP strategy helps create an environment in which participants can focus their attention on obtaining their GED® credential while gaining meaningful work experience that supports their long-term employment goals.

### ***Length***

PREP duration should be no more than six months. The Youth Labor Program Specialist **must** approve PREP participation lasting longer than six months.

PREP has four distinct phases:

1. Refer, Recruit, Enroll
2. Joint Employment and Education Plan
3. Implementation of Support Services and Incentives
4. Work-based learning opportunities

### **REFER, RECRUIT, ENROLL**

Most PREP participants will fall into one of three groups.

#### ***Group One***

A participant currently enrolled in both the Title I Youth Program and is engaged with AEL providers seeking a GED® credential. Begin the PREP process outlined below.

#### ***Group Two***

Title I Youth Participants with interest in obtaining a GED® credential. Those identified in this group should be referred to the local AEL provider.

#### ***Group Three***

An individual engaged with an AEL provider but is not a Title I Youth. These participants can be referred to the Virtual Job Service to complete Title III and Title I Enrollment and Case Manager assignment.

### **JOINT EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION PLAN**

All PREP participants will utilize the ***Joint Employment and Education Plan (JEEP)***. Existing participants can incorporate the JEEP into their existing plan. The JEEP will be a formalized contract between AEL, DLR, and the participant. Participants who do not meet the expectations outlined will be at risk of losing PREP financial support.

The JEEP can be modified any time when needed and agreed upon by all members of the IRT. The JEEP should offer some flexibility to help the participant overcome barriers that might be keeping them from meeting all expectations.

The JEEP is created through an Integrated Resource Team (IRT) meeting with DLR, the AEL Provider, and the participant. The JEEP will be signed by DLR, AEL, and the participant and uploaded into SDWORKS. Monitors will take place with AEL providers monthly once the JEEP is signed. A signed copy of the JEEP must be given to the participant.

AEL will formalize objectives related to the goal of GED® credential by identifying:

- Monthly hours engaged in learning activities;
- Other required details for GED® credential; and
- Timelines for testing

DLR will formalize objectives related to employment by identifying:

- Procedures for submitting documentation;
- Requirements for incentive and support service payments;
- The date of monthly monitor; and
- Responsibilities related to any Work Experiences.

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF SUPPORT SERVICE AND INCENTIVES**

### ***Incentives***

PREP creates financial incentive designed to encourage meaningful progress towards obtaining their GED® credential. Incentive payments are awarded to participants who meet the monthly expectations outlined in the JEEP. Incentive amounts should be no more than \$200 per month.

### ***PREP Incentive Obligations***

PREP incentives will be obligated using Out-Of-School Youth Other, or In-School Youth Other funding streams. There are no PREP specific incentive forms rather a signed JEEP that outlines the expectations for monthly incentives must be attached to the obligation before it is approved.

### ***PREP Incentive Payments***

PREP Incentive Payments can be processed once per month. A completed monthly monitor from the AEL provider that shows the participant has met or exceeded expectations through the previous month must be attached to the payment voucher before being approved.

### ***Prep Support Services***

Enhanced Support Services will be available to all PREP participants who would benefit from Youth Program funds to assist covering housing related expenses.

### ***PREP Housing***

Participants maximums for housing related support services are \$2,800. Payments should be issued directly to housing or utility providers whenever possible. WIOA Youth funds cannot cover mortgage payments.

Housing related support services will be tiered related to the progress a participant should be making towards earning their GED® credential.

### ***Rent/Utilities incentives***

- \$800 max for month 1 (after required 12 hours of participation) and 2.
- \$400 for month 3 and 4 or until WEX is established
- \$200 for month 5 and 6 or the month after a WEX is established, whichever comes first.

### ***Non-PREP Incentives and Support Services***

Incentives and Support Services not duplicated by the PREP program can be made available to participants. These determinations, like all Incentives and Support Services, should be made on a case-by-case basis and must follow existing Youth Incentive Policy and Support Service policies.

## **WORK-BASED LEARNING**

PREP participants will be required to participate in paid work-based learning, such as a Work Experience (see [Work Experience](#) in Policy 5.36), a field related to their long-term employment goals.

The participant and DLR will work together to identify potential worksites and can begin month 3 of PREP participation. Participants need to be participating in a paid work experience by month 5 of their participation in PREP. I

If a suitable worksite cannot be found by the fifth month, the Youth Labor Program Specialist will review the participant's JEEP for incentive and support service payments to continue.

## **MONITORING**

AEL providers, DLR, and the participant must work cooperatively. AEL providers must provide monthly monitor forms to DLR that state the participant's hours of attendance, overall progress and any needs identified by AEL staff should be documented on the Work-Based Training Monitor ([Form 19](#)) and SDWORKS case notes.

IRT meetings should be scheduled with AEL, DLR and the participant any time the participant does not meet the expectations outlined in the JEEP.

## **RESCINDING SUPPORT**

Financial assistance can be discontinued when a participant fails to meet the monthly expectations on the JEEP as documented on the Monitor ([Form 19](#)) and after an IRT if suitable adjustments to the JEEP cannot be made.

When it is decided that a participant will no longer continue receiving PREP financial support the participant must be notified and the time and method of notification must be documented in SDWORKS.

PREP will make all Incentive and Support Service payments for the month that PREP financial support has been discontinued.

For example: If DLR discontinues PREP financial support and notifies the participant on July 5<sup>th</sup> any Incentives and Support Service payments for July should still be issued.